



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

12 March 2020

COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

UPDATE REPORT

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, DEMOCRATIC SERVICES AND COMMUNICATION.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of the report is to provide Members with an update in respect of:

- Welsh Language Standards- requirements for Community/ Town Councils
- Consultations including Corporate Plan, Budget, Residential Care Services Consultation
- Single Point of Contact
- Forward Work Programme and Training requirements

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Community Liaison Committee:

- (i) Notes the updates provided within the report;
- (ii) Agree the future calendar dates proposed within the report and advise of any locations that may be utilised for meetings of the Committee
- (iii) Suggest suitable items for discussion for future meetings.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 A number of items are under consideration by the Community Liaison Committee and this report looks to provide Members with details of the current status of these items to ensure Members are kept up to date.

3.2 The report also proposes a future calendar of meetings and to seek suggestions for future possible agenda items and venue locations from Committee Members

4. WELSH LANGUAGE STANDARDS

- 4.1 Following requests from Town and Community Council Members, information is provided within this report on the Welsh language Standards and how these may affect their organisations.
- 4.2 County Councils are subject to the Welsh Language Standards. Town and Community Councils are not subject to these standards *unless* they are acting on behalf of the County Council.
- 4.3 Some public sector organisations, including Town and Community Councils, implement Welsh Language schemes. The Welsh Language Commissioner has a list of the organisations that have developed Welsh Language Schemes and examples of these schemes on the Commissioner's website.
- <http://www.comisiynyddygydraeg.cymru/English/Organisations/Pages/Welsh%20Language%20Schemes.aspx>
- 4.4 Welsh language schemes existed before the Welsh language standards, and are the result of the Welsh Language Act 1993 that places a duty on the public sector to treat both languages equally when providing services to the public.
- 4.5 The Welsh Language Commissioner's website provides advice on the process for developing a Welsh Language Scheme and indicates that an organisation needs to follow the Commissioner's statutory guidance when preparing a Welsh Language Scheme. This is available on the website but I have attached a copy for information.
- 4.6 The [Welsh Government's Good Councillor Guide for Local and Town Councillors](#) has the following in relation to the Welsh Language:

"The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011 enshrines in law the official status of the Welsh language in Wales. It sets out the general principles that the Welsh language should not be treated any less favourably than the English language and that people in Wales should be able to live their lives through the medium of the Welsh language if they choose to do so. It is just one of a number of ways in which the Welsh Government is committed to achieving a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

The 2011 Measure creates the role of the Welsh Language Commissioner whose aim is to promote and facilitate use of the Welsh language. The Measure and related regulations set standards for when and how public bodies must use Welsh, for example when dealing with the public, providing services, making policy decisions, recruiting staff, dealing with employees and keeping records. The Commissioner's role is to impose and enforce the regulations although there is a right of appeal. The Welsh Government has yet to make regulations for community councils and Welsh language schemes remain in force until the regulations are made.

Your council is expected to treat the Welsh language reasonably and proportionally in its dealings with the public. This can affect meetings, correspondence, telephone calls, local signs, published documents, grant-making policies, tenders, contracts, notices and websites. You may find it helpful to find out what standards your county or county borough council has. If your council has a part to play in meeting the objectives in the local well-being plan, then it may consider how to help achieve 'vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language'.

5. **ENVIRONMENT WALES ACT**

- 5.1 Following requests from Members of the Community Liaison Committee for an update on the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 which contains a new Biodiversity Duty a separate session will be arranged for members to provide support to clerk and members on implementing the duty.

6. **CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no current public consultations taking place

7. **FUTURE MEETINGS**

- 7.1 To assist Members with their diaries the following dates have been proposed as future meeting dates of the Calendar. Members are asked that if agreed upon, these dates are added to Members dairies:

- Thursday 7th May 2020 – 10:30am (Venue to be confirmed)

- 7.2.1 Members are asked to consider and advise upon any agenda items that they wish to see taken forward in the future to assist in the collaborative working of the Committee. The items on the Forward Work Programme for consideration at future meetings are as follows:

- Cwm Taf Public Service Board Wellbeing Objectives
- Members Portal
- Public Rights of Way
- Consultations
- Environment Wales Act
- Local Government and Elections Bill

- 7.2.2 In addition, if Members would like to host any future meeting of the Committee then they are also asked to advise accordingly.

8. **SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT**

- 8.1 The Committee will be aware of the commitment given to provide a dedicated single point of contact for community council clerks and members to raised matters with the Council outside of normal communications channels available.
- 8.2 The Council recognises this role as important in resolving matters which may not have been sufficiently addressed through normal channels or require specific assistance.
- 8.3 The Council has now appointed an additional member of staff, within the Democratic Services team, who will hold as one of their key responsibilities the role of single point of contact and liaison with Community Councils in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- 8.4 Contact details have been circulated to all Members and the officer has attended a meeting of the RCT Town and Community Council Clerks on the 8 January 2020 and will attend one to one meetings with the clerks where requested.

9. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 There are no Equality or Diversity implications aligned to this report

10. **CONSULTATION**

As part of each item various consultation meetings have taken place with Members / Officers and are advised upon within the report.

11. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATION(S)**

- 11.1 None.

12. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 None

13. **LINKS TO THE CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT.**

- 13.1 Working in partnership with the Town and Community Council's within Rhondda Cynon Taf links with the three priorities within the Corporate plan of People, Economy and Place, as it will help people and Communities to help themselves and assists in building a sustainable Rhondda Cynon Taf.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

AS AMENDED BY

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES